



Rockville Reports

MARCH 2019 • VOL. 65 #3



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Rockville's Fight Against the Opioid Epidemic to Tip Off with Former NBA Player and Free Events

Herren to Tell His Story March 7; College to Host Panel and Training March 30

Rockville's campaign to combat the opioid epidemic will welcome Chris Herren, a former NBA player and recovery advocate, at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 7 at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Drive.

After his basketball career, Herren founded Herren Project, a nonprofit serving individuals and families impacted by substance use and the disease of addiction. His story has been the subject of an Emmy-nominated ESPN Films documentary.

Herren's presentation in Rockville, *Prevention Starts with All: The Chris Herren Story*, will detail the former Boston Celtics player's inspirational journey from addiction to recovery, and his mission to make a difference. The presentation is free and open to all.

The city's efforts against opioid abuse will continue with a panel discussion of experts on the topic and free training on how to respond to an opioid overdose at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, March 30 in Room 301 of the Science West building at Montgomery College – Rockville, 51 Mannakee St. Admission is free. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/registration and register for course #9455.

The panel discussion will include Raymond Crowell, chief of Montgomery County's Behavioral Health and Crisis Services, and Meghan Westwood, executive director of Maryland Treatment Centers, Inc.

Partnering with Rockville to host the event are Montgomery College, the Montgomery



Chris Herren, former NBA player.

County Department of Health and Human Services, and the Montgomery County Collaboration Council.

Rockville's Mayor and Council, city staff, and community partners are joining together to raise awareness and combat the epidemic. Rockville

is not immune to the crisis of opioid overdoses. Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services reported 471 incidents from July 2016 through June 2017 in which emergency responders administered Narcan, a rescue drug used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, according to the county's health department.

In June, Rockville's Mayor and Council joined state and local jurisdictions in a lawsuit against drug manufacturers and distributors for their role in the crisis. To learn more, visit RockvilleReports.com and search "opioid lawsuit." ❖

FREE!

Interviews for Vacant Council Seat to Take Place March 2

Interviews for candidates who have applied to fill a vacant seat on Rockville's council will be held 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, March 2.

An additional interview date of Tuesday, March 5 has also been scheduled, if necessary.

The vacancy was created following the election of Julie Palakovich Carr to the Maryland House of Delegates to represent District 17, which includes Rockville. The candidate selected will serve the remainder of that term. The next Mayor and Council election for all five seats on the body will be held Tuesday, Nov. 5.

The interviews will be conducted in the Mayor and Council chambers at City Hall, 111

Maryland Ave.

Candidates were required to submit a narrative of their relevant experience and background, a statement of their priorities and vision for the city, and a financial disclosure statement. Those materials are available to view at www.rockvillemd.gov/DocumentCenter/Index/2462.

The interviews will be held in open session, televised on channel 11, and livestreamed at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville 11 (select "Live video streaming" under "Watch Rockville 11 Programming").

Video of the interviews will be available the next day at www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand. ❖

Mayor and Council Amend APFS

The Mayor and Council adopted a resolution at their Monday, Feb. 4 meeting to amend the Adequate Public Facilities Standards.

The amendments keep the city's school adequacy test at 120 percent of school capacity for new residential development approvals — the same level as before.

Only Champion Projects, which are limited to the South Pike area, are exempt, within certain criteria:

- That the project consists of high-rise residential units only.
- That residential units will be constructed over a period of

10 years or more.

- That each Champion Project application include at least one non-residential use and a half-acre of public open space.

The Mayor and Council clarified that any amendment to add more residential units to a Champion Project that was previously granted an exemption would be subject to the school adequacy test.

To watch the Mayor and Council's meeting on the APFS, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter, and select the TV icon next to the Feb. 4 agenda item. ❖

New Hotline, Website Offer a Way to Report Potential Fraud, Waste and Abuse

Rockville now offers a telephone hotline and website for community members to use to report potential fraud, waste and abuse related to city government services and employees.

The hotline and website allow community members to make anonymous reports. The service, provided through WhistleBlower

Security, a contractor independent of the city, promotes transparency and provides an opportunity for the city to be made aware of potential problems.

Community members may report potential fraud, waste and abuses by calling a toll-free number or filing an online report. *continued on pg. 3...*



Get Ready to Vote by Mail

Rockville's 2019 election will be conducted by mail.

The City of Rockville will conduct a vote by mail election for mayor and four councilmembers on Tuesday, Nov. 5.

Be sure your ballot gets to you:

- Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/election.
- Check your address.
- Update your information.
- Register to vote.

Ballots will be mailed to registered voters only. Ballots may be returned by mail or in person at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave. All ballots must be received by 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 5.

Rockville Ranks High in Diversity Study

Rockville and three neighbors once again occupy the top four spots on WalletHub's list of the most ethnically diverse small cities — and four of the top 10 spots among all cities, of any size, in the entire United States.

Rockville ranks ninth overall and fourth among small cities. Gaithersburg (second overall nationally), Germantown (third overall) *continued on pg. 7...*

In This Issue...

- 2** The city manager's proposed FY 2020 budget.
- 4** Mayor and Council to talk Town Center.
- 5** Save these dates for Earth Month.
- 8** Time to Celebrate Thomas Farm at 10.

MAYOR & COUNCIL
111 Maryland Ave.
Rockville, Maryland
20850-2364

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Rockville Launches New, Weekly Emailed Newsletter

Now you can find more news, more often with the new "Rockville Reports" weekly email newsletter.

The newsletter features timely news delivered to subscribers at noon on Sundays, updating readers about what's

going on in their city government over the next seven days.

Sign up for the new weekly email: Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters and check the box next to "Rockville Reports: City News." ❖

Rockville Utilities

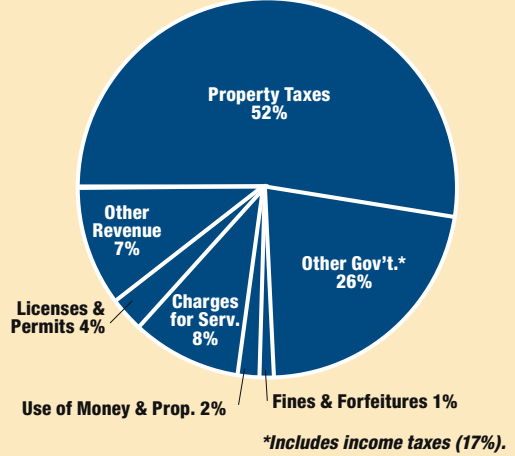
Rockville operates six enterprise funds, four of which are utility funds. They function like a private business, with costs fully recovered through user charges. The utility funds are the water fund, the sewer fund, the refuse fund and the stormwater management fund. Two of these funds – water and sewer – include rate increases for Fiscal Year 2020 that were approved last year. These rate increases are necessary to repair and replace aging water and sewer pipes and other infrastructure vital to providing these services, and for required payments to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission related to a regional wastewater treatment plant.

For the city's water and sewer customers, water rates for a residential property with a 3/4-inch meter and 16,000 gallons of usage will increase approximately 5.4 percent. Sewer rates for the same property will increase 6.9 percent. Recycling and trash service will remain at \$445 per household per year. The stormwater management rate will remain at \$132 per year. For tables illustrating the annual financial impact of changes to the city's fees and charges for two sample households, see page 23 of the proposed budget at www.rockvillemd.gov/budget.

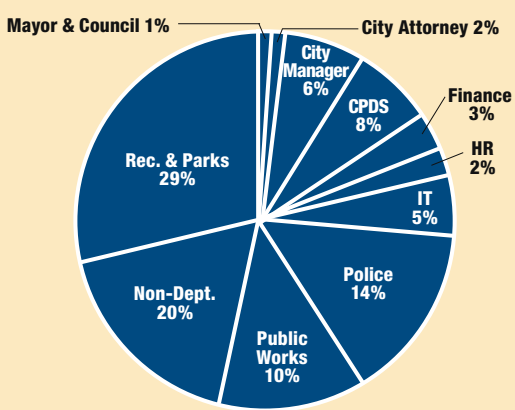


Understanding the General Fund

Proposed FY20 General Fund Revenues



Proposed FY20 General Fund Expenditures



Budget Watch: Fiscal Year 2020

Rockville's Mayor and Council continue budget deliberations this month with a public hearing and work session focused on crafting a Fiscal Year 2020 budget that outlines the city's priorities.

City Manager Rob DiSpirito was scheduled to present the Mayor and Council with a FY 2020 budget proposal on Feb. 25, after the deadline for this edition of "Rockville Reports." Find video of the presentation with the Feb. 25 meeting listing at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter.

The budget, which covers the fiscal year that begins July 1, is scheduled for adoption by the Mayor and Council on Monday, May 6.

The proposed FY20 operating budget of \$138.5 million is an increase of 1.7 percent over the total operating budget for FY 2019. The general fund budget, which supports the largest portion of the operating budget, is \$84.2 million, a 2.2 percent increase.

The city's current real property tax rate of \$0.292 per \$100 of assessed valuation would remain the same for FY20. All residential and commercial property owners pay this tax.

Property tax, the city's largest source of general fund revenue, is estimated to increase by 1.8 percent from FY19, to \$43.5 million, due to higher property assessments, new properties on the tax roll and an increase in personal property tax revenue consistent with recent trends. Income tax, the city's second largest single source of general fund revenue, is estimated to increase by 1.1 percent, to \$14.2 million.

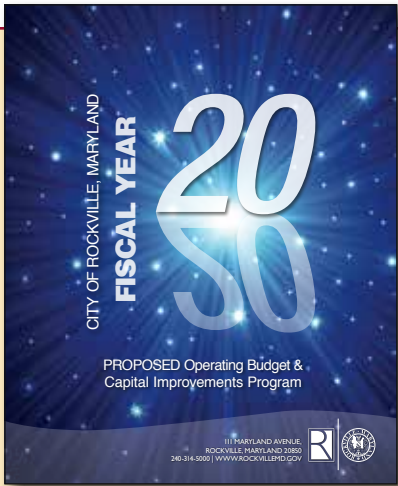
The proposed FY 2020-FY 2024 Capital Improvements Program, the five-year plan for funding new construction and infrastructure maintenance, includes \$31.7 million in new funding, combined with a carryover of \$54.3 million to support 42 projects during the fiscal year. The proposed budget includes funding for two newly funded projects:

- Renovations to the Rockville Swim and

Fitness Center's outdoor recreation pool, tot pool, sprayground, outdoor pool filter room, overhead pool lights and deck areas, and replacement of the water slide tower and flume. The FY20 funding is for concept design only.

- Street and sidewalk improvements in the Stonestreet Avenue corridor near the Rockville Metro Station, including traffic signal reconstruction at South Stonestreet Avenue and Park Road, and improvements to North Stonestreet between Park Road and Lincoln Avenue. The FY20 funding is for design and right-of-way acquisition.

To review the proposed budget, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/budget.



OFFER YOUR IDEAS

- At www.rockvillemd.gov/budget.
- At public hearings during the March 4 and April 1 Mayor and Council meetings.

BUDGET CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

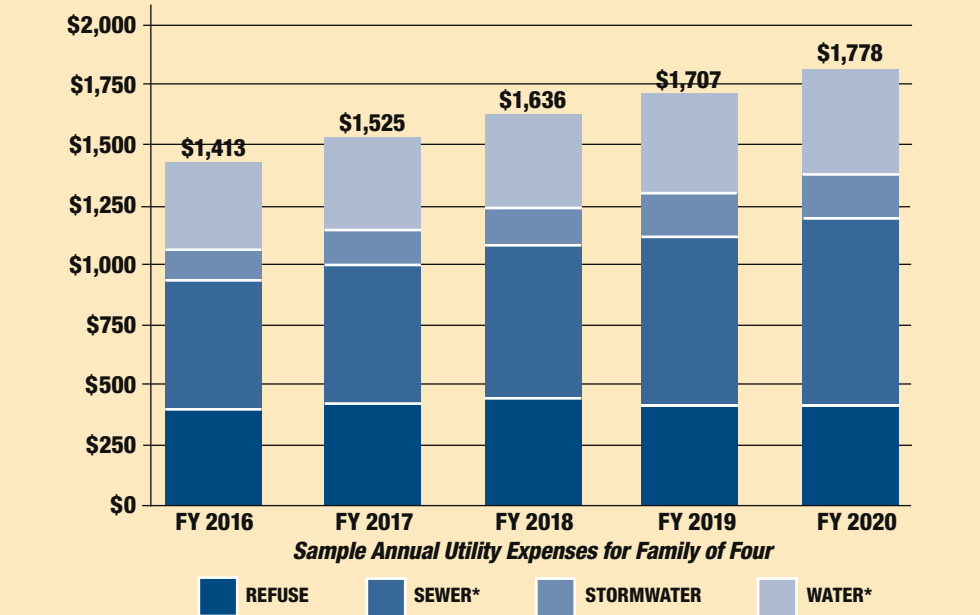
- **Monday, March 4:** Public hearing.
- **Monday, March 18:** Mayor and Council work session.
- **Monday, April 1:** Public hearing and Mayor and Council work session.
- **Friday, April 5:** Public record closes.
- **Monday, April 29:** Mayor and Council work session (if needed).
- **Monday, May 6:** Budget adoption.
- Meetings are broadcast on channel 11 on county cable, livestreamed at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11, and available a day after each meeting at www.rockvillemd.gov/video ondemand.

Proposed Rockville Utility Rates

Based on the proposed FY20 rates, annual residential expenses for city utilities for a sample family of four would increase by \$71.36 for the year, an increase of 4.2 percent.

	ADOPTED FY 2019	PROPOSED FY 2020
Refuse Rate		
No increase	\$445 per year	\$445 per year
Sewer Rate*		
6.9% increase	\$714.40 per year	\$763.48 per year
Stormwater Management Rate		
No increase	\$132 per year	\$132 per year
Water Rate*		
5.4% increase	\$415.56 per year	\$437.84 per year

Past Five Years of Utility Expenses



* The city's water and sewer rates are tiered based on meter size. Nearly all the capital costs in the sewer fund, and a substantial portion of the operating costs, are payments for the operation of and capital improvements to the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority's Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant. For more on water and sewer rates, see page 318 of the proposed budget. Find the proposed budget at www.rockvillemd.gov/budget.

WHAT ARE WE CELEBRATING THIS MONTH? This month is Women's History Month (see the page 6 ticker for details). This is also the month Rockville recognizes Rare Disease Day (as proclaimed Feb. 4 by the Mayor and Council). But also, among many others March is for: caffeine awareness; celery; cheerleading safety; social work; multiple sclerosis; and Irish-American heritage.

Mayor & Council

mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov



Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton
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Councilmember Beryl L. Feinberg
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Councilmember Virginia D. Onley
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Meetings: Monday, March 4 and 25 at 7 p.m.
Worksession: Monday, March 18 at 7 p.m.
Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter.

Drop-in sessions are held monthly at 5:30 p.m. in the Mayor and Council office. No appointment necessary. Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton is joined by Councilmember Virginia D. Onley on March 25.

Get Involved with the City

Stay informed of the business before city leaders and share your thoughts:

- **Follow the action in person:** Meetings are at 7 p.m. on most Mondays, at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., or follow from home on channel 11. Meetings are also available via live streaming, and on demand the day after the meeting, at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11.
- **Stop by a drop-in session:** The mayor and one councilmember meet with community members one Monday each month from 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- **Speak at Community Forum** (up to three minutes): Community Forum is held during each Mayor and Council meeting. Priority is given to speakers who have signed up in advance by calling 240-314-8280 by 4 p.m. on the day of the meeting, and to those who are speaking on an agenda item.
- **Send an email** to mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov.

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Survey Seeks Public Input on City's Boards and Commissions

An online survey seeks to gather input from community members about their opinions of and interactions with the city's boards and commissions, including what new boards or commissions they might like to see established.

The Boards and Commissions Task Force is undertaking a review of the city's charter and code, and will provide a report to the Mayor and Council. The task force's work includes examining the effectiveness, necessity, structure, membership definitions and work plan of each city board or commission.

The task force has reached out to current and former boards and commissions members and city staff about their experience. The broader reach of the public survey will help the task force determine if the city's boards and commissions are achieving their intended goals and will be used to guide the task force in their recommendations to the Mayor and Council.

The survey will be available beginning Friday, March 1 at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZWSMNS7>.

Boards and commissions are made up of volunteers from the community and play an important role in city government, providing the Mayor and Council with informed public opinions, thoughts and ideas that help shape the city.

The task force is reviewing enabling legislation for each board or commission, and will propose revisions to ensure clarity and understanding of the scope of their work. It will identify gaps or overlaps between boards and commissions, and recommend continuing, repurposing, merging, eliminating or adding boards or commissions. It will also review membership requirements and determine whether eligibility requirements or expertise should be required for appointment.

To learn more, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/2098.

IN THE YEAR OF THE PIG, FLY ...

Martial artists with the US Chinese Wushu Institute perform during the city's Lunar New Year celebration Feb. 16.



Students Have a Chance to be Mayor for a Day in May

Mayor Newton to Visit Rockville Fourth-Graders

Rockville fourth-graders once again have a chance at serving as the city's Mayor for a Day this spring by taking part in the statewide "If I Were Mayor" essay contest.

The theme of this year's contest, organized by the Maryland Municipal League and the Maryland Mayors Association, is "Together We Can." Students are asked to write an essay, no longer than 275 words, that would describe how, if they were mayor, they would get the community and fellow officials to work better together.

One winning essay will be selected from each of MML's 11 regional districts throughout the state. Winners, their parents, and their teachers will

receive \$100 cash and will be recognized during an awards ceremony in Annapolis where they will cruise on the Harbor Queen. Essays must be received by mail by Saturday, March 30.

The Mayor and Council consider the contest to be a wonderful exercise in government studies and encourage fourth-graders attending schools in Rockville to participate.

Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton welcomes the opportunity to speak with students about the essay contest, municipal government and what it is like to be mayor of Rockville. Teachers or school administrators may email cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov to arrange for the mayor to visit their school, though a mayoral visit is not required for students to

Mayor and Council to Vote on MPDU Program Changes

The Mayor and Council are scheduled to vote Monday, March 4 on proposed changes to the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit program.

As proposed, applications would be submitted directly to the MPDU property. This would only affect the rental component of the MPDU program.

The change creates a one-stop shop application process at the property, where residents can learn about availability and qualification, and apply for a unit all at once. Applicants will no longer have to wait for the city to issue an MPDU certificate and risk missing out on an MPDU unit.

For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/194/Affordable-Housing.

Fraud Tipline

continued from pg. 1...

Examples include violations of rules or regulations, gross waste of funds or theft of city resources. For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/fraud-waste-abuse.

A similar system is already in place for reports by City of Rockville employees. Alexandria, Virginia; Baltimore; Bowie; and Gaithersburg have lines for their employees and the public to report potential fraud, waste and abuse.



"If I Were Mayor" essays are due by March 30.

participate.

In addition to the winners chosen by MML and MMA, the mayor will select a student attending school in Rockville to serve as the city's Mayor for a Day in May.

Learn more by visiting www.mdmunicipal.org and selecting "Mayor's Essay Contest" under "Programs and Services," or call the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations' office at 240-314-8280.

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- **Testify at a hearing** or in writing to cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov or by mail to the City Clerk's Office, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850.
- **Volunteer** to be on a board or commission. Learn more below and find other ways to give of your time and talents at www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer.

Boards and Commissions

Anyone interested in serving on a board or commission may write to: Mayor and Council, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, call 240-314-8280, or fill out and submit an expression of interest form at www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions.

Note: Meetings are held at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., unless otherwise noted.

- **March 5 Asian Pacific American Task Force** 7:30 p.m.
- **March 6 Compensation Commission** 6:30 p.m.
- **March 7, 14, 21, 28 Development Review Committee** 9 a.m.
- **March 7 Board of Appeals** 7 p.m.
- **March 7 Environment Commission** 7 p.m.
- **March 12 Board of Supervisors of Elections** 6 p.m.
- **March 12 Human Services Advisory Commission** 6:30 p.m.
- **March 13 Cultural Arts Commission** 7 p.m. Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive.
- **March 13, 27 Planning Commission** 7 p.m.*
- **March 19 Rockville Seniors, Inc.** 2 p.m. Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Dr.
- **March 20 Rockville Sister City Corporation** 7 p.m.
- **March 21 Historic District Commission** 7:30 p.m.
- **March 27 Rockville Housing Enterprises** 6:30 p.m. David Scull Courts Comm. Center
- **March 27 Human Rights Commission** 7:30 p.m.
- **March 28 Recreation and Parks Advisory Board** 7 p.m. Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive.

*Televised on Rockville 11.

Vacancies

The Mayor and Council are seeking applicants for the following boards and commissions:

- Board of Appeals (1 alt.)
- Board of Supervisors of Elections (1)
- Compensation Comm. (1)
- Historic District Commission (3 reg./1 alt.)
- Human Services Advisory Board (1)
- Human Rights Commission (1)
- Planning Commission (1)
- Senior Citizens Comm. (4)
- Sign Review Board (1)

For more, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions or call 240-314-8280.



STAY INFORMED: The Mayor and Council meeting schedule and agendas can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/mayorcouncil. Staff reports with background information are included with the agendas, which are posted several days before each meeting.

Mayor and Council to Hear Updates on Town Center

The Mayor and Council will continue their discussion of strategies to strengthen Rockville Town Center's vitality at their 7 p.m. Monday, March 25 meeting.

At a Nov. 13 special meeting of the Mayor and Council, city staff presented 11 potential approaches to address opportunities and challenges for the mixed-use activity center in the heart of Rockville. It followed the October 9 Mayor and Council Town Hall meeting, in which hundreds of Rockville residents, along with many businesses, discussed how to make Rockville Town Center an even better downtown.

On March 25, the Mayor and Council will receive an update on progress made toward those 11 items.

More information on the presentation will be available nearer to the meeting date at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter

The meeting will be broadcast live on channel 11 on county cable systems, livestreamed at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11 and available a day after the meeting at www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand.

Diversity Workshop Seeks Students

"Building Bridges in a Diverse Society," a dynamic, highly interactive diversity leadership workshop offered by the city's Human Rights Commission, returns in April.

The free workshop is for students living in or attending high school in Rockville, or attending Montgomery College – Rockville. It will be held from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, April 13 at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave.

The curriculum, based on the teachings of peace-building organizations, will provide students with tools to handle difficult situations through an understanding of diverse populations. It is designed to help students recognize prejudice and isolation, appreciate diversity, and create an environment of inclusion in their schools. Student leaders of diverse backgrounds are especially encouraged to attend. Student Service Learning hours will be offered and verification of hours attended is available for college students. Lunch will be provided.

Find an application at www.rockvillemd.gov/hrc. For more information, contact Janet Kelly, the city's Human Rights Commission liaison, at 240-314-8316 or jkelly@rockvillemd.gov. For Americans with Disabilities Act modifications, call the city's ADA coordinator at 240-314-8108, TTY: 240-314-8137 or relay 711.

Save the Date for Cooking and Conversation

The city's Asian Pacific American Task Force presents Cooking and Conversation from 3-5 p.m. Sunday, April 7 at the Peter Chang restaurant, 20 Maryland Ave. Unit A, in Rockville Town Square.

Watch as chef Peter Chang creatively demonstrates how to prepare an Asian dish and meet city ambassadors. Register for this free event at <https://apacookingconversation.eventbrite.com>.

For additional details, call Janet Kelly, APA Task Force staff liaison, at 240-314-8316. For Americans with Disabilities Act modifications, call the city's ADA coordinator at 240-314-8108, TTY: 240-314-8137 or relay 711.

National Golf Foundation Delivers Report on RedGate Golf Course Property

Representatives from the National Golf Foundation presented a report on RedGate Golf Course at the Monday, Feb. 25 meeting of the Mayor and Council.

The report is available at www.rockvillereports.com/bit.ly/NGFRedGateReport.

The 18-hole, city-owned RedGate Golf Course closed Dec. 31, following an announcement by operator Billy Casper Golf that it would end its leasing relationship with the City of Rockville by the end of the calendar year. The NGF report will initiate a discussion by the Mayor and Council on the property's future.

The city requested from NGF a strategic review of

the golf course, clubhouse and driving range operation, an evaluation of the long-term potential of the facility, and recommendations for how to enhance economic performance. The report includes an analysis of the physical and economic condition of the facility, and the market environment in which it operates.

Billy Casper Golf had leased and managed RedGate, at 14500 Avery Road, since 2011. The facility is expected to remain closed until the Mayor and Council can review their options and determine next steps.

To watch the NGF presentation, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter and select the TV icon next to the Feb. 25 agenda item. ✚

REDI Looks Back on a Year of Growth

Rockville Economic Development, Inc.'s 2018 annual report highlights a year of growth and change that saw the introduction of new programs and a new executive director.

REDI's programs include the Maryland Women's Business Center, which helps entrepreneurs start and grow women-owned businesses positioned for long-term growth. In 2018, MWBC helped to launch 62 new businesses and served 1,768 individuals, helping to increase client sales by \$3.8 million, an 81 percent increase over 2017.

REDI introduced two new programs in 2018. The state-funded Retail Façade Improvement Grant program awards eligible Rockville retailers matching grants to improve their building's exterior façade. The Rockville Small Business Impact Fund offers financial assistance to qualified, small- and medium-sized businesses to promote economic development in mixed-use areas. In its first year, the program is focusing on Rockville Town Center. It will be expanded to other parts of the city in future years.

Those programs complement REDI's successful, established incentive programs: the Rockville MOVE Program, which provides relocation assistance to com-

panies moving into the city, and the Business Expansion Fund, which provides grants to businesses that are growing. Through those programs, REDI assisted five companies occupying more than 21,000 square feet and representing nearly 300 full-time jobs.

Rockville once again led Maryland municipalities with an average unemployment rate of 3.3 percent, well below the average municipal unemployment rate of 4.2 percent, Paul Newman, REDI's board president, wrote in a letter introducing the 2018 report.

"Rockville remains a vibrant business community where education and diversity are valued, and business leaders' voices are heard," Newman wrote. "With the recent Amazon headquarters announcement and other regional growth, REDI remains poised to serve businesses that want to launch, locate and expand in Rockville."

Download the full report at <http://rockvilleredi.org/redi-2018-annual-rpt/>. Visit www.youtube.com/cityofrockville and search "Stewart" to view a recent Rockville 11 interview with Cynthia Stewart, REDI's new executive director. ✚

Meet a Rockville Employee:



Connie Robinson

This month, "Rockville Reports" hears from Connie Robinson, who recently performed "A Walk of Faith That Should Never be Forgotten" at the Rockville Senior Center for Black History Month. Connie, a city temp, can be found at the front desks of several Rockville facilities.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Connie relocated to Maryland eight years ago.

Tell us more about your passion!

I'm a re-enactment performer. I've performed and written several scripts in a variety of venues throughout Pennsylvania and Maryland. My performances have been in schools, universities, nursing homes and museums, and once at a county jail in Pittsburgh, where I received a standing ovation from the audience.

What is "A Walk of Faith That Should Never be Forgotten"?

It's the story of the 217-mile, 11-day walk that hundreds of enslaved folks made, from Maryland to Pittsburgh, on their journey to freedom.

I portray Mrs. Mary

Peck Bond, an abolitionist and business woman, who worked alongside of her poppa, Mr. John Peck, who was a conductor on the Underground Railroad, in 1847.

Together they worked with other famous abolitionists from Maryland, such as Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass and Francis Harper. With their help, Rose Weems, whose family was enslaved right here in Rockville, dressed as a man and escaped to freedom.

That sounds not only fun, but historically valuable.

Reenacting Peck Bond's character and sharing stories from the past is truly my passion! I love sharing the stories and passing them down to the next generations of African-Americans. I don't want them to forget the courageous people who paved the way for folks like Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks and others who get all the attention — the ones whose legacies should be honored as well!

Watch Rockville 11's feature on Connie Robinson at www.youtube.com/cityofrockville. ✚

Program Open Space Money Approved for Dogwood Park

The Maryland Board of Public Works has approved a request from the Department of Natural Resources to help pay for several improvements to Rockville's 44-acre Dogwood Park, at 800 Monroe St.

The project will receive \$313,088 in Program Open Space funding.

Work at the park includes construction of four covered baseball dugouts, Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant access paths to two baseball fields, renovations

of the press boxes, electrical upgrades to the snack bar, replacement of a portion of the fencing, and the installation of field lighting, among other improvements.

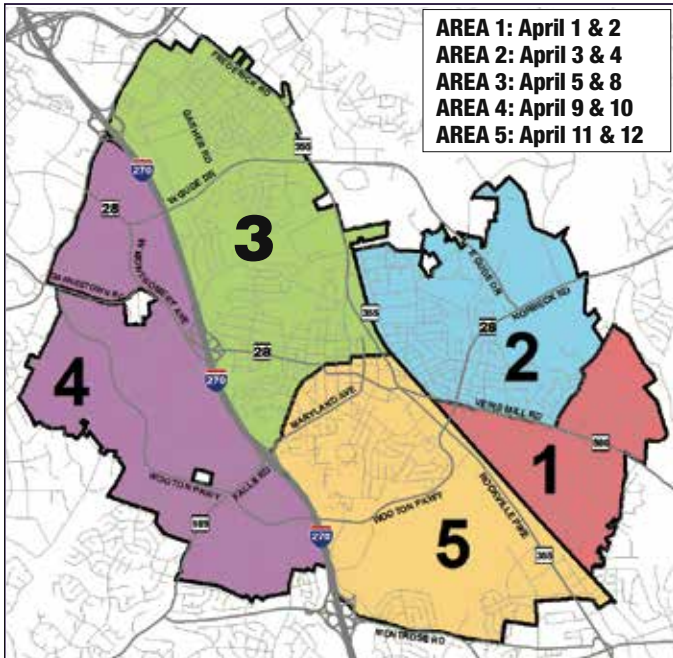
The work, which is partially completed, is expected to be finished in Fiscal Year 2021, which begins July 1, 2020.

Find more information about Dogwood Park and other recreational facilities at www.rockvillemd.gov/1219/Recreation-Centers-Parks. ✚

Connect with us on Social Media.



MORE NEWS, MORE OFTEN, ON YOUTUBE ... Now on Rockville 11's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/cityofrockville): Meet Rockville Economic Development Inc.'s new executive director in an exclusive interview. And, if you missed them in February, check out our black history facts and "A Walk of Faith," a re-enactment of the story of Mary Peck Bond by the City of Rockville's own Connie Robinson. Read more about Robinson on this page.



See interactive map at www.rockvillemd.gov/leafcollection.

Spring Leaf Collection Coming in April

The city will vacuum leaves from neighborhood curbs, April 1-12, in five collection areas throughout Rockville.

An interactive map at www.rockvillemd.gov/leafcollection allows residents to input their address and learn when their leaves will be collected.

Rake leaves next to, but out of, roadways, gutters and bike lanes, and away from parked vehicles. Leaves should be raked by 6 a.m. on the first day of their collection period, but no earlier than one week before the collection dates to avoid grass damage or fire hazards. Remove sticks and other objects

from leaf piles. Avoid parking near leaf piles or other vehicles.

After the collection period ends, use biodegradable paper lawn bags or 32-gallon trash cans (without plastic garbage bags) to set leaves out on your refuse and recycling collection day. Use alternative disposal methods such as mulching or composting. Do not dump leaves, grass clippings or other yard waste into storm drains, along stream banks or directly into streams, where they can cause blockages that contribute to localized flooding or release nutrients that lead to fish kills. ❖

30 Years of Rockets, Robots, Chemistry and Coding

Rockville Science Day is Three Decades of Tradition

The 30th annual Rockville Science Day offers a chance to experience science hands-on, with science and technology-related exhibits, activities, games and demos from over 90 local organizations and businesses.

This Rockville tradition is free and will be held from noon-5 p.m. on Sunday, April 28, at Montgomery College – Rockville, 51 Mannakee St.

Activities and exhibits include building and launching rockets, telescopes, robots and backyard wildlife, ship models, microscopes, snakes, stream science, a pigeon release, Civil War medical practice, coding challenges, math puzzles, chemistry in action (including flames, explosions and other reactions), electric vehicle demos, quadcopters, archaeology mini-digs, 3-D printing and brain games.

Student Service Learning hours are available for Montgomery County Public Schools students 16 and older who volunteer before or during the event. Learn more and register to exhibit at <http://rockvillesciencecenter.org>.

org/rockville-science-day/.

Can't wait for Science Day? The Rockville Science Center sponsors a free Science Tuesday on the second Tuesday of the month, a Science Café on the third Tuesday of the month and summer camps at the Bullis School and at City of Rockville community centers.

For something a bit more hands-on, the center hosts activities at the Makerspace in the Rockville Memorial Library, 21 Maryland Ave., in Rockville Town Square. Activities include programming, electronics, amateur radio license training and other high-tech projects. Find the Makerspace schedule at www.meetup.com/Rockville-RSC-Makerspace.

Learn more about these and other upcoming events at <http://rockvillesciencecenter.org/events/list>.

RSC is a nonprofit supported by the generous donations of its members and sponsors, including the City of Rockville. Visit <http://rockvillesciencecenter.org/support> to learn more. ❖

NEW WEEKLY NEWSLETTER!
Sign up for weekly email at
www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters

Save These Dates for Earth Month in Rockville

The 49th anniversary of Earth Day is Monday, April 22, and Rockville will mark it with a monthlong celebration beginning in March and including the following free activities aimed at environmental sustainability:

March 25: The Mayor and Council issue a *proclamation recognizing Earth Hour and Earth Day in Rockville*.

March 30: *Earth Hour*. See the ticker, in red, at the bottom of this page for details.

April 3: *6th Annual Montgomery County Energy Summit*, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. in Silver Spring. Learn more at www.mcenergysummit.org.

April 6: *Arbor Day Ceremony and Tree Giveaway*, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive. Ceremony and tree planting at 10 a.m.

Residents can register for free trees at www.rockvillemd.gov/freetree.

April 11: *Glenview Mansion and Peerless Rockville Speaker Series: Rockville's Legacy of Environmental Protection*, 7 p.m. at Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Drive. Learn more at www.peerlessrockville.org/events-and-programs.

April 13: *31st Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup*. Stream cleanup sites include:

- Croydon Creek Nature Center, 852 Avery Road, 9 a.m.-noon.
- Twinbrook Comm. Recreation Center, 12920 Twinbrook Parkway, 9:30-11 a.m.
- Maryvale Park, 812 First St., 10 a.m.-noon.

City staff will greet volunteers. Gloves and bags will

be provided. Student Service Learning hours are available. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Bring water and wear sturdy shoes. For more information, or to register, email environment@rockvillemd.gov or call 240-314-8870.

April 13: *Stream Cleanup Meetup*, noon-2 p.m. at Saints Row Brewing, 1211 Taft St. Join Croydon Creek Nature Center and the Environment Commission for a family-friendly meetup after the morning stream cleanups. Open to all. Food onsite. Beer specials for volunteers over 21.

April 27: *Prescription Drug Take-Back Day*, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Rockville City Police Station, 2 W. Montgomery Ave. Drive up and drop off unused or expired medications so that they

are safely disposed of and kept out of our environment. For more information, call Cpl. Ken Matney at 240-314-8922.

April 27: *Spring Festival with Native Plant Sale*, 10 a.m.-noon at Croydon Creek Nature Center.

April 28: *Science Day*, noon-5 p.m. at Montgomery College – Rockville campus, 51 Mannakee St. Visit the Croydon Creek Nature Center table. Free. Learn more at www.rockvillesciencecenter.org/rockville-science-day and in the article on page 5.

Learn how to get involved and live greener and healthier at www.rockvillemd.org/environment. For environmental news and events, sign up to receive the city's Environment and Sustainability quarterly email newsletter in your inbox. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters and select "Environment and Sustainability." ❖

Community Police Academies Offer Hands-On Experience and Education

Rockville Offers Academies for Community and for 60-Plus Residents

Community members once again this spring have the opportunity to learn what it takes to be a police officer through the Rockville Community Police Academy or through a special course aimed at 60-plus residents.

The Rockville City Police Department is accepting applications for the free, 8- to 10-week Rockville Community Police Academy, which will be held in March, April and May at a time and place to be determined. Participants 18 and older will learn about all aspects of the police department, receive hands-on training and earn a graduation certificate upon course completion. Topics will include:

- Crime scene processing.
- Firearms training simulations.
- K-9 unit demonstrations.
- Traffic law.
- Detectives and investigations.
- Bomb unit.

For more information and registration, email Cpl. Ken Matney at kmatney@rockvillemd.gov.

RCPD is also offering a free course highlighting safety and education for the 60-plus population. The course will explore code enforcement, the K-9 unit and forensic science, and will include a tour of the city's police station. It will meet from 10:30 a.m.-noon on Wednesdays, March 20-April 24, in the Azalea Room of the Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive. Register for course #8185 at www.rockvillemd.gov/registration.

For more information about the Rockville City Police Department and its community policing mission, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/police.

City Academy Offers an Insider Look at Rockville Government

Free, Six-Session Program Begins March 27

The Rockville City Academy returns this month with a new opportunity to learn about the City of Rockville.

The free, six-session program begins Wednesday, March 27 with presentations from staff leaders who oversee the city's daily operations. Topics will include:

- Rockville's form of government and the Public Information and Community Engagement Division.
- The Department of Public Works.
- Planning and the master plan process.
- Police and code enforcement, including neighborhood watch.
- The Department of Recreation and Parks, including a tour of city recreation facilities.

The highly interactive program seeks to empower new and existing community leaders to use their talents to participate in and serve their communities and the City of Rockville.

The program will be held at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., with the exception of the April 3 session, which will be a visit to the nearby Rockville City Police Department station at 2 W. Montgomery Ave. Find full session dates and times, and register, at www.rockvillemd.gov/academy. Spaces are limited. Participants must be 16 or older and must be able to attend most classes.

For more information, contact Hjarman Cordero at hcordero@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8344.



LIGHTS OUT! ... Rockville will turn out the lights in observance of Earth Hour, an international effort in support of climate change action. Earth Hour encourages people to turn off all non-essential lights in their homes and businesses for one hour, from 8:30-9:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 30. The city will participate by turning off all non-essential lights at the city's Gude maintenance facility. Learn more and find ways to participate in Earth Hour every day at www.earthhour.org/blog/10-ways-celebrate-earth-hour-daily.



**LEARN MORE ABOUT
THE CITY ON ROCKVILLE II**
www.youtube.com/cityofrockville

Mansion Closed; Alternative Access Available From Avery Road ...

Glenview Mansion is expected to be closed through March to allow for construction of a new Americans with Disabilities Act-accessible parking lot.

While access to the mansion is closed during construction, visitors can access the tennis courts, Croydon Creek Nature Center and Recreation Services building via Avery Road (off of Baltimore Road). Depending on weather and other factors, the mansion is expected to reopen in April.



First-Aid Leadership, Spam Fighting and Caregiving at the Senior Center

Be prepared in a medical emergency, protect yourself against fraudsters and learn about the rewards — and stresses — of being a caregiver, this month at the Rockville Senior Center.

Register for classes at the senior center information desk by calling 240-314-8810 or with the course number at www.rockvillemd.gov/ registration.

Emergency Training/First Aid. This free class arms participants with the knowledge and skills needed for effective leadership in an emergency.

From 1-2:30 p.m. Thursday, March 14, attendees will learn how to recognize and care for a variety of first-aid emergencies, such as burns, cuts, scrapes, sudden illnesses and responses to breathing and cardiac emergencies for those 12 years and older. Presented by Jamie Kohler, safety specialist with the City of Rockville.

Register for the class with course #7415.

Safeguards Against Spam and How to Avoid Robo-Dialers. Identify spam and learn simple techniques so you don't click on harmful emails or links, or fall victim to phishing scams.

This free class, led by Mary O'Donoghue, director of Corewood Care, will be held from 1-2 p.m. Tuesday, March 12. Register with course #8021.

Caring for the Caregiver. As the population ages, more caregiving is being provided by people who aren't health-care professionals. These informal caregivers provide 80 percent of long-term care in the United States.

This free session, held from 1-2 p.m. Thursday, March 28, will focus on the rewards and stresses of the caregiving role, and will discuss strategies for coping, resiliency building and self-care. Register with course #7413.

Register Now for the Suds & Soles 5K

Registration is now open for the 2019 Suds & Soles 5K.

This year's race, to be held at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, June 22, has been selected as the Maryland Road Runners Club of America 5K Championship Race.

The Montgomery County Road Runners Club and the City of Rockville are teaming up again to present this 5K course, on neighborhood roads, that begins and ends in Town Center. The post-race party will feature live music by Lloyd Dobbler Effect and the opportunity to sample great beverages from a commemorative mug. A KidZone, for children 9 and under, will feature a kids fun run, children's activities and light refreshments.

The race is open to adults, youth and children, and, new this year, features a tiered pricing structure offering limited slots at reduced prices. Register early and save. To learn more about the race — including sponsorship opportunities, and get registered, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/sudsandsoles.

Proceeds benefit the Rockville Recreation and Parks Foundation, Inc. and MCRRC's youth and beginning running programs. Learn more about the Rockville Recreation Fund at www.rrpfi.org.

Unknown Kings, Spring Music and Murder: What's Coming Up at Rockville's Civic Center

Performances to welcome in spring, balletic tilting at windmills and the Miss Maryland pageant are part of a busy March at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre. And remember to mark your calendars for a chance to play detective in April at Glenview Mansion.

Victorian Lyric Opera Company presents "The Gondoliers" 8 p.m. March 1 and 2; 2 p.m. March 3.

Gilbert and Sullivan's story of two gondoliers who discover that one is actually the king of the far-off land of Baritaria — but they don't know which one. Come to enjoy the fun and music (and figure out the mystery).

Tickets for adults are \$28; \$24 for seniors 65 and older; and \$20 for students.

The Rockville Concert Band presents "Spring Potpourri" 3 p.m. Sunday, March 10.

An eclectic array of concert band favorites, from the classics to pops. No tickets required; donations appreciated.



Rockville Civic Ballet presents "Don Quixote" 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 16; 2 p.m. Sunday, March 17

Don Quixote de la Mancha and Sancho, his squire, set out to defend virtue and punish transgressions against chivalry.

Tickets cost \$17; \$13 for seniors 60 and older and children 12 and younger.

USA National Miss Maryland Pageant

A pageant program with a positive approach to pageantry for young women aged 4-25. The optional competition will be at 8 p.m. Friday, March 29. General admission is \$10. The final show and crowning will be held 2 p.m. Sunday, March 31. Admission is \$30. Seniors tickets are \$25. Children younger than 3 are free.

Murder at the Mansion: "A Wedding to Die For," presented by A Taste For Murder Productions 8 p.m. April 12 and 13; 2 p.m. April 14.

From the groom to the garter, Madison planned the perfect wedding. Will someone have to die to keep it from spiraling into chaos?

Complimentary desserts and cash bar with beer, wine and soda. Doors open 90 minutes before the performance. Show-only tickets cost \$35 per person or \$60 per couple. A buffet by Mission BBQ is available 90 minutes before the show for \$18 per person.

For tickets or more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/theatre, call the box office at 240-314-8690, or email theatre@rockvillemd.gov. F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre and Glenview Mansion are located at 603 Edmonston Drive. ❖

Rockville Student Juried Art Show is Back

The Rockville Student Juried Art Show returns this year to a new location. Because of ongoing renovations to Glenview Mansion's parking lot, the 2019 student art show will be on display at the Rockville Senior Center.

Sponsored by the city's Recreation and Parks Arts Division and the Rockville Art League, the show will be held from Sunday, March 31 to Friday, April 26.

Due to space limitations, entries are open only to students in grades 6-12 who live or attend school in Rockville. Students may enter one 2-D work of art, in any medium. Work must be appropriately finished, framed and securely wired for hanging. Up to 80 works are anticipated to be selected for the show.

Interested students need to complete and submit the online entry form by Wednesday, March 13, which can be found at <https://form.jotform.com/90376745655165>. Students will be notified by Friday, March 15 if their artwork is selected.

Artwork can be dropped off in-person by students or guardians at the senior center, 1150 Carnation Drive, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, March 23. The opening reception will be held from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sunday, March 31.

Artwork can be picked up from 5-6:30 p.m. Monday, April 29 and 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesday, April 30.

For more information, contact arts programs supervisor Betty Wisda at bwisda@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8681. ❖

Spring Sports Now Registering

Youth coach-pitch baseball, T-ball and soccer, and adult basketball, softball, volleyball and soccer are just a few of the sports all ages can take part in this spring.

Registration for spring sports leagues for youth and adults is open. The registration deadline is Thursday, March 7, with a discount for early bird registration by Friday, March 1.

Practices for youth track and field begin at the end of March, with meets beginning in mid-April. Practices for youth soccer, T-ball and coach-pitch baseball begin in early April, with games beginning mid-April.



Registration deadlines for adult league players and teams are in late March.

Coaches are needed for the spring season. If you're interested in taking part, contact sports@rockvillemd.gov.

Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recreation/sports for league details and registration information, or call 240-314-8620. ❖

Register for a Garden Plot and Get Growing

Join more than 100 active fellow gardeners to test your green thumb. Make friends, keep active and reap the benefits of growing your own fresh vegetables.

The City of Rockville has 159 garden plots, approximately 25-by-25 feet, available for rent at Woottons Mill Park for growing food and other plants.

The cost is \$80 per plot for nonresidents; Rockville residents pay \$55 per plot. Registration for the garden plot program is now open. The season runs April 1-Nov. 11.

The city provides access to water and mulch; gardeners are responsible for fencing, weed barriers, hoses, tools and other gardening supplies.



Registration forms and an information packet can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/gardenplots. Call

the Rockville Civic Center's main office number, 240-314-8660, for more information. ❖



WOMEN'S HISTORY LIVE ... Look for Rockville 11's Women's History Month Facebook Live series, throughout March. Follow the City of Rockville on Facebook for live one-on-one conversations with some of the women who are a part of Rockville's strong legacy of leadership.

March CALENDAR

CC Croydon Creek Nature Ctr., 852 Avery Rd., 240-314-8770.
GM Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8660.
FSF F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8690.

LP Lincoln Park Community Ctr., 357 Frederick Ave., 240-314-8780.
CH Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., 240-314-5000.
SR Rockville Senior Ctr., 1150 Carnation Dr., 240-314-8800.

FACILITIES LEGEND:

SFC Rockville Swim and Fitness Ctr., 355 Martins Lane, 240-314-8750.
TF Thomas Farm Community Ctr., 700 Falls Grove Dr., 240-314-8840.
TC Twinbrook Comm. Rec. Ctr., 12920 Twinbrook Pkwy., 240-314-8830.



1-3 "THE GONDOLIERS." Presented by the Victorian Lyric Opera Company. Gilbert & Sullivan's story of two gondoliers who discover that one is king of the far-off land of Barataria – but they don't know which one! Come to enjoy the fun and music (and figure out the mystery). Tickets: adults, \$28; seniors 65 and older, \$24; students, \$20. March 1 and 2, from 8-10:30 p.m. March 3, 2-4:30 p.m. **FSF**

1,8 BREWS AND BULBS. Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection Energy Programs partners with local breweries. Learn how to reduce your energy bill, switch to LED bulbs and enjoy a brew. 5-7 p.m. Friday, March 1 at Saints Row Brewing, 1211 Taft St. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Friday, March 8 at 7 Locks Brewing, 12227 Wilkins Ave. More info at mygreenmontgomery.org.

2 LITTLE ACORNS: FOREST DISCOVERY. Children aged 18-36 months explore nature through a variety of play-based activities. Time will be spent outdoors, weather permitting. Adult participation required. Spaces are limited. Advanced registration recommended. Register for course #8033. \$7 R/\$9 NR. 10-11 a.m. **CC**

3 SCOUT PROGRAM: EARTH ROCKS. Naturalists will help scouts complete the necessary badge/adventure requirements. All materials provided. Pins/patches are not supplied by the nature center. Rain or shine. Dress for the weather. For more information or to register, call 240-314-8771 or email naturecenter@rockvillemd.gov. \$14 R/\$16 NR. 2-4 p.m. **CC**

4 MAYOR AND COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING ON FISCAL YEAR 2020 PROPOSED BUDGET. See article on page 2. **CH**

5 TAX SEASON AND SCAM. Attorney John Pontius of Pontius Tax Law will discuss options for senior taxpayers with unfiled tax returns, large unpaid tax bills, liens/levies and audit examinations. Free. 10 a.m.-noon **SR**

7 SPORTS LEAGUES REGISTRATION DEADLINE. See the article on page 6.

7 NATURE TOTS: FROGS & TOADS. Discover the wonders of nature with your child as a naturalist helps you delve into a nature topic through play, crafts, stories and hikes. Dress for the weather. Adult participation required. Spaces are limited. For ages 2-5. Register for course #8029. \$8 R/\$10 NR. 10-11:30 a.m. **CC**

7 PREVENTION STARTS WITH ALL: THE CHRIS HERREN STORY. Rockville is not immune to the crisis of opioid overdoses gripping communities across the United States, and the city is taking steps to fight back. The city is sponsoring an awareness campaign that will kick off with a program featuring Chris Herren, a former professional basketball player and recovery advocate who founded Herren Project, a nonprofit serving individuals and families impacted by substance use disorder and the disease of addiction. Free. 7 p.m. See article on page 1. **FSF**

10 "SPRING POTPOURRI." Presented by the Rockville Concert Band. An eclectic array of concert band favorites from the classics to pops. No tickets required; donations appreciated. 3-5 p.m. See article on page 6. **FSF**



Rockville offers a variety of classes and programs each season. Sign up at www.rockvillemd.gov/registration. Enter the course number listed on the calendar entry to see more details and register.

R = Residents • NR = Nonresidents • MEM = Member • NM = Nonmember

FOR MORE INFO AND UP-TO-DATE EVENT LISTINGS: WWW.ROCKVILLEMD.GOV/CALENDAR.ASPX

WalletHub's Diversity Ranking

continued from pg. 1...

and Silver Spring (fourth overall), ranked first through third, respectively, on the small cities list.

Rockville earned the same rankings in WalletHub's 2017 and 2018 studies.

To identify the most ethnically diverse places in America, WalletHub compared more than 500 of the largest U.S. cities across three key metrics. Rockville ranked 41st overall in ethno-racial diversity, eighth over-

all in linguistic diversity and 35th overall in birthplace diversity.

More than one-third of the city's residents were born outside of the U.S. Of the city's total population of 64,331 at the time of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2011-2015 American Community Survey, 20.5 percent were Asian, 15.7 percent were Hispanic or Latino, and 9.8 percent were black. More than 43 percent spoke a language other than English. Read the complete rankings at <https://wallethub.com/edu/cities-with-the-most-and-least-ethno-racial-and-linguistic-diversity/10264>. ❖

Free Tax Preparation Appointments

Montgomery County is hosting free tax preparation sessions throughout tax season for low- to moderate-income families that earned \$55,000 or less in 2018.

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, which is run by the Montgomery County Community Action Agency, provides IRS-certified volunteers from nonprofit and public agencies to help low- to moderate-income families maximize their tax refunds and credits, including the Earned-Income Tax Credit,

and e-file their federal and state tax forms.

Appointments are available 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Wednesdays, until April 15, at the Community Action Agency, 1401 Rockville Pike, Suite 320. The program is for Montgomery County residents and by appointment only. No walk-ins. Schedule an appointment by calling 240-777-1123. (TTY users, call 711) or at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cashback.

For more information, visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/freetaxhelp or email VITA@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Senior Center Renovations ...

Renovations are underway throughout the Rockville Senior Center, including work affecting the front entrance foyer, offices, Carnation Room stage, bathrooms and dining room. Renovations are expected to be completed in June.

The front entrance is closed. Visitors and members should use side or back parking lot entrances.

For more information, call the center at 240-314-8800 or email seniorcenter@rockvillemd.gov.



Spring Forward and Check Your Smoke Alarms

Daylight saving time begins March 10, which is the ideal reminder for homeowners to check their smoke alarms while setting clocks forward.

Your home's smoke alarms are the best way of notifying you and your family of a fire. State law requires that battery-operated smoke alarms be replaced every 10 years from the date of manufacture. The devices should also be tested at least once a month.

State law also calls for older smoke alarms to be replaced with new, sealed, long-life battery-powered smoke alarms. Hardwired 120-volt electric smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years with new 120-volt smoke alarms with battery backup to ensure proper and timely operation in a fire.

Homeowners with hardwired smoke alarms should not replace their devices with battery-powered alarms. Fire code-compliant smoke alarms can be purchased at most home improvement stores.

For more information visit www.rockvillemd.gov/fire_safety or email Timothy Diehl, city fire marshal, at tdiehl@rockvillemd.gov.

Get a Free Bike Just by Being a TERRIFIC Kid!

Are you in elementary school and Trustworthy, Earnest, Respectful, Responsible, Involved, Fair, Industrious and Caring?

That's all you need to take part in Rockville's 2019 TERRIFIC Challenge, which gives free bikes to students in grades 1-5 who fulfill six out of 16 "good deeds," such as perfect attendance in school for one month, volunteering with a charity, picking up litter in a public place or helping someone who is sick or elderly.

To be eligible, students must have a sponsor to monitor their progress. Successful participants receive a certificate for taking part and are invited to attend the Mayor and Council meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, May 6.

Completed forms need to be turned in by Saturday, April 5. (If you previously earned a bike, why not try again and earn one for a younger sibling?) Find details and download a form at www.rockvillemd.gov/terrificbikes. Questions? Call 240-314-8620.

Awardees receive their reconditioned bikes and new helmets at a special event, 10 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m., Sunday, May 19, hosted by Rockville Bike Hub, where bikes will be fitted and kids will receive a brief safety orientation.

Have a bike to donate? Email rockvillebikehub@gmail.com or visit www.rockvillebikehub.org for more information.



Questions, Concerns or Ideas?

Reach out to Rockville City Manager Rob DiSpirito at rdispirito@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8102.

International Night Brings World's Cultures to the Stage

The International Night festival, celebrating the world's cultures that are represented in Rockville, returns to F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre on Friday, March 22.

At this free event, audience members will enjoy performances and costume displays, and can sample unique and traditional ethnic and cultural foods in the theater's social hall.

The doors open at 5:30 p.m., with an address by at-

tending Mayor and Council members at 6 p.m. followed by performances and food tasting.

No tickets or registration are required, but seating is limited.

For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/internationalnight or contact yyeboah@rockvillemd.gov. The F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre is located at 603 Edmonston Drive. ✚



Time to Celebrate 10 Years of Thomas Farm Community Center

Thomas Farm Community Center is turning 10 and we need you to help sing "Happy Birthday"!

The center will hold an open house from 2-3:30 p.m. Saturday, April 6. Enjoy a cupcake, try a workout or fitness class, and enjoy crafts and other activities to celebrate the center's decade at the heart of the community. Follow #ThomasFarmTurns10 on the city's social media accounts for updates and a scavenger hunt competition.

Thomas Farm, the city's first community center west of Interstate 270, opened for

recreation classes on Jan. 20, 2009, with the official opening and ribbon cutting on Saturday, March 21, 2009.

Located at 700 Falls Grove Road at the intersection of West Montgomery Avenue, the 18,000-square-foot building is next to Falls Grove Park and the Carl Henn Millennium Trail.

For more information on the center, including class schedules, membership rates and available amenities, email thomasfarm@rockvillemd.gov or go to www.rockvillemd.gov/thomasfarm. ✚



The March to May, Memorial Day and Hometown Holidays

Four Stages of Music, Local Food Favorites and Kids Fun

Return May 25-26

The Hometown Holidays Music Fest returns to Rockville Town Center this Memorial Day weekend with more than 25 regional and national performing artists and the best of local food.

The 31st annual free festival will feature four stages of entertainment, the Taste of Rockville, "the beach" sand pile and activities for kids, from noon-8 p.m. Saturday, May 25 and Sunday, May 26.

Find more details, as they are announced, at www.rockvillemd.gov/HTH. Visit "City of Rockville Hometown Holidays" on Facebook, where a new musical act will be profiled each week on #MusicMonday.

The city's 75th annual

Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade will take place from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday, May 27, in Town Center.

Applications to participate in the parade or to highlight your community group with a booth during the music festival are available at www.rockvillemd.gov/HTH. From the top navigation bar, select "Sponsors and Participants," then "Event Participation."

For more information about participating in the parade or applying to become the ceremony's featured speaker, read the article on this page.

The festival is just a five-minute walk from the Rockville Metro station and parking is available throughout Town Center. ✚

Apply Now to Take Part in the Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade

Rockville is seeking speakers and participants for the city's 75th annual Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday, May 27, in Town Center.

Rockville and Montgomery County residents who have retired from or currently serve in the United States military are eligible to take part in the ceremony as a featured speaker.

Volunteer speakers must be comfortable speaking in public and must prepare a five- to seven-minute speech about their experiences in the armed forces, including what it means to serve and to honor those who have served.

Contact Amanda Knox at aknox@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8604 to participate or

learn more.

Rockville's Memorial Day Parade will march through Rockville Town Center with a variety of marching bands, drill and pompom units, floats and other displays at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, May 27. More than 20,000 spectators are expected to attend.

Organizations or individuals interested in participating in the parade should apply by Friday, April 5. Rockville's parade is a juried event, with more than \$3,000 in cash prizes expected to be distributed over five parade categories.

Learn more about the parade and download parade rules and regulations and the parade application at www.rockvillemd.gov/HTH. ✚



Get Into It

City Manager: Rob DiSpirito
Deputy City Manager: Jennifer Kimball
Director of Communication: Marylou Berg
Public Information Specialists: Cliff Cumber, Sean Sedam

Web and Digital Manager: Tatum B. Walker
Graphics and Printing: Sylvia England, Eric Ferrell, Leon Porter, Lori Russler
Rockville II: Hagop Balekjian, Craig Buchanan, Kathy Dantzler

Rockville Reports is the official publication of the City of Rockville, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850. It is delivered to all homes and businesses within Rockville's city limits. Any individuals with disabilities who would like to receive the information in this publication in another form may contact the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator at 240-314-8100; TTY 240-314-8137. Have an idea for "Rockville Reports"? Email pio@rockvillemd.gov.



BACK IN THE DAY ... The headline for the "City of Rockville Newsletter" from March 7, 1979, was "Blizzard of '79 — the Aftermath." "With few exceptions, outstanding cooperation and community spirit were displayed" during the emergency, according to the article. But there was some confusion about the city's snow removal procedures that required explanation — hence the article. These days, you can simply turn to Rockville's website for that information, at www.rockvillemd.gov/winterweather.